

THE
NASSAU MONTHLY.

VOL. V.]

MAY, 1846.

[No. VIII.]

TRUE REFORMATION.

MAN is as much distinguished for his social disposition, as for his intellectual character. His soul is like a great bell swung in the centre of the universe, that vibrates to the gentlest as well as the greatest force, and with every motion sends forth its wondrous tones. His heart is the world's focal point where converge all the lines of light, and sound. There are heard the mingled harmonies of human feeling. There thrills nature's diapason. There, too, in light and shade, is beauty's every form. There in bright, brilliant, glowing colors mingling and melting into all most delicate hues and tints is pictured beauty's every image. For God "hath set the world in man's heart." And as man has been made capable of receiving on his mind images of all things in the universal world; and of tracing the workings of an ever active and all harmonious Providence; so does his heart leap forth to embrace all the joys of domestic and social life. His affections delight in the intertwining of kindred affections; and the bold and noble sentiments of his heart go forth into the battle-field of life with renewed strength and ardor when companioned with kindred spirits. But there exists not that correspondence and harmony between the heart and social forms of life, that there is between the mind and the material universe. The mind dwells with delight upon every expression of creative thought. Its glory is the discovery of truth; and it lingers

lovingly while it roams enchanted through the fair scenes of creation; for there is a spirit of power, of goodness and beauty reigning in every part of nature. But the heart does not gain that satisfaction from the enjoyments of society, that the mind derives from contemplating the works of God, from gazing upon the starry firmament whose shining hosts are ever uttering forth a glorious voice,

"For ever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine."

Society was left for the moulding of man's hand; and it everywhere too plainly bears the impress of his own frailty and corruption. Many are the stalking forms of wretchedness that appear like giants in the gloom of twilight. Here we behold one made by passion, like pestilence and death, the destroyer of all that is fair and lovely; there another with the ghastly eye, and trembling joints of want, toiling for life upon a barren heath. Though many a domestic circle presents an Edenlike scene; though many a festive time banishes all thought of woe, there is too much misery, too much that is wrong for a spirit of heavenly origin to contentedly endure. Because of this prevalence of vice and misery the earnest minds of the earth have always labored for reformation; not reformation to some old system of man's invention on account of their reverence for antiquity; but for reformation to those principles of virtue, that are eternal as the being of God, and on account of their reverence for what is pure, true and good. The mass of men too on account of their personal relations to society, and because they feel, if they think not, often adopt the watchword reform, and rising up in their terrible strength, attempt to work out, what they desire, with their own rude hands. Sometimes too they nobly perform their work; as did the modern Greeks, when surrounding at midnight the palace of king Otho they demanded, with the calm voice which integrity and firmness of soul always uses, a constitution within an hour; and having accomplished their object retired again in peace to the quiet walks of life. But the reforms that spring from the mass of men have in view a different end from the reformations originating with those true heroes, those men of giant moral action, that appear

in the world from age to age, and diffuse through it new principles of life, and action. The aim of the former is most generally the rectification of some political evil, or the preservation of some established right. The latter seek the elevation of the race by the removal of all the sources of social evil. The former are conservative in their character; the latter progressive. Yet these are not contrary; the former is but as an opening scene in the great Time-acting drama of the latter. Sometimes, however, men hurried blindly on by a sense of real or fancied suffering, sweep away in maddened fury forms of evil, with no other object in view than their destruction. They forget that earth's soil sends forth, after the thorn, the thistle; that it is only the diligent hand of cultivation that makes it bloom. They do nothing more than those ancient tyrannicides of Athens, who plunged their dagger to the heart of one tyrant, but to throw the reeking blade submissive at the feet of another.

They are true reformers, who apply remedies, that change not the form, but remove the origin of the evils of society. These evils are twofold in their character, physical and moral. They are want and vice. Their origin is ignorance and wickedness. A want of the knowledge, and consequently a want of power over the resources of nature is the cause of physical suffering, of penury, of want and excessive toil for a mere subsistence. A thousand comforts may be lying in concealed forms around the shivering, hungering, and dying savage. The toiling husbandman may be sweating over his barren field, when, had he knowledge of nature's richness, he might be gathering abundant harvests. The weary laborer bowed with toil, when crying in the anguish of his spirit "let the day perish wherein I was born," had he knowledge of nature's power might, with the elements doing him service, be admiring the wonderful works of his Maker. The domination of vicious principles is, on the other hand, the cause of all the misery inflicted by man on his fellow, of violence, of oppression, and the wretchedness caused by him who becomes a sepulchre of hopes. Whoever then lessens, or removes these sources of evil performs the office of a true reformer. For by this free scope is given for the development of the higher faculties, and for the action of the better principles of man.

The physical suffering of mankind is lessened by the labors of men devoted to natural science; who explore the fields of discovery, who better endow man's life by giving him the power of obtaining life's comforts from the concealed treasures of nature. To these belong a high place in the estimation of men, not only on account of the glory, that is always shed over the human race by the achievements of lofty intellect, but, to their greater honor, as benefactors of their kind. The other source of evil, experience teaches, is only to be removed by the power of revealed truth. Yet there are many antagonist influences, that lessen, if they do not destroy the sway of vice. Whatever points out the loathsomeness and folly of wickedness; whatever exhibits the loveliness and goodness of virtue serves to extend the dominion of virtue over human action. And whatever exalts and refines human nature by impressing it with an ever-abiding sense of awe for what is good and great, or beautiful and fair, diminishes the power of vice over the heart. Therefore men who foster a literature of purity and noble sentiment, men who devote themselves to the creation of intellectual beauty, partake of the character of true reformers. He has not labored in vain, who has woven messages of faith and hope into the words of song. For its sweet and gentle sounds stealing almost unheard through the chambers of the soul, like an unseen spirit of the better land, cast around a happy spell. He has not toiled for nought, who has told of glistening guardians "swift as the sparkle of a glancing star," that attend the endangered wanderer; for many are the weak and faint-hearted. He has not labored for nought who has spoken of "this wide spread and universal theatre," and filled it with ideal creations. For by exhibiting in the blue glare of hell's light the passions of pride, and power, and the loathsome actions of the base, and brute-like sensual, he has shown what man has to fear. He has also taught what man may hope, by singing the actions of the nobly virtuous with the sweetness and majesty with which an angel would sound them from his harp; by exhibiting the good and virtuously great passing, as in joyous triumph, from the black cloud-land of suffering unto the glory of undimmed brightness. Far from in vain is it that they toil, who cheer the heart of man, who teach the sympathy of

heaven, who show how sublime a thing life may be made. They pour sweetening mixtures into the fountains of bitterness. They elevate the race by calling into the action of life higher principles than those that move the man whose soul's vision extends no farther than the limits of the sensible horizon; for like Responsibility, sweeping away the boundaries of the present, they place man amid scenes of sweetly solemn and inspiring grandeur; and thus they partake of the character of true reformers.

Therefore, all men who labor to promote the cause of religion, to advance physical science, or to form a chaste, and thoughtful literature are laboring in the field of true reformation.

THE SONG OF 'THE MARINER.

THE deep blue sea! the deep blue sea!
Where the howling tempests roam,
And the wild waves revel proud and free,
O'er their boundless watery home.
Oh! give to me that trackless main,
Afar from the eagle's scream,
Where Freedom's pure unsullied reign
Is bright as a sun-lit beam,
When the Storm-king rides o'er the angry deep,
And the heaving billows yawn,
And the foaming spray from their summits leap,
Like the bounds of the startled fawn;
When the tameless lightnings wildly rave,
And the moaning thunders wail,
Oh! give to me that trackless wave
As a home for my flying sail!
And when the queen of the silent night
Looks down from her throne on high,
And the gentle zephyrs wing their flight
Through the azure tinted sky;
When the sparkling gems with lustre bright,
Flash down on the peaceful sea,
Then let me view that fairy sight—
Oh! an ocean home for me!

Far down in the fathomless wave is a grove
 Hewn out from a coral strand,
 Where the joyous spirits of ocean rove,
 Mid the pearls and golden sand.
 'Tis tangled o'er with the raven hair,
 That blythesome fairies gave,
 And shreads of amber glitter there
 In that grotto, neath the wave.
 There where the coral's bristling spears
 Are hidden from mortal view,
 To pearls, the bright-eyed Peri's tears,
 Are changed in the billows blue.
 There 'neath the silvery-crested waves
 They gleam through the darksome shade,
 And as brightly shine in those distant caves,
 As ever on earthly maid—
 And a sound so sweet that silence thrills—
 As sweet as the sighs of love,
 That the charmed ear of the Nautilus fills
 Far on the wave above :
 His shallop he stops, as the plaintive wails,
 Through the listening waters flow,
 And quickly he furls his silken sails,
 And hies to the wave below.
 When borne from the realms of joy and mirth,
 There let me rest from the storm,
 No prouder grave in the wide broad earth,
 Can ye give this wondering form.
 There will I list to the mermaid's sigh,
 Secure from the dashing surge,
 And the dying mariner's last sad cry
 Shall be my funeral dirge.

THE LAST OF THE SCOTTISH BARDS.

THERE is something sad, as well as solitary in being left alone in the world without an associate. The degree of this solitude and sadness differs according to the circumstances in which we are left. If we are cast afloat in life in our youthful days, we may soon form new companions and in their society through time forget those friends from whom we have been separated. How different though is the case, when in old age we have to encounter neglect and oppression in drag-

ging out a weary existence. This was the case with the last of the Scottish Bards. He who had been the welcome guest in princely mansions; courted and caressed by "Lord and Lady," was in his old and infirm days turned an outcast on the world, "to beg his bread from door to door." He who delighted a king with the music of his harp, now tuned it to please the ear of a peasant. Now his only tokens of better days are his withered cheek and grey tresses—his only recollection of joy the harp; and his sole companion an orphan boy. When the characteristics of a nation were virtue in peace, and bravery in war, it was the bards who made the actions of heroes to become interesting and their fame worthy of immortality. They attended their chief in the camp and inspired his clan with courage in the battle—they magnified his actions in the castle and dazzled the guests at the festal board with his fame. But, although the great employment of the Celtic bards was to portray the character and sing the praises of heroes, they nevertheless joined in the battle. They were not only professed bards, but celebrated warriors—they relate expeditions in which they had been engaged, and sing of fights in which they fought and overcome. To die unsung by a bard was considered a misfortune sufficient to disturb the ghosts of warriors in another world. Woe was thought to befall the chief who died without their requiem. When, then, they were held in such high esteem as this, we are led to inquire how it happened that the last of their race with hoary hairs, and feeble form, was left to wander alone in a country once so fond of the music of his harp. The answer is this:

"Old times were changed, old manners gone,
A stranger filled the Stuart's throne."

He had not only outlived his companions and master, but to witness bigots spring up in their stead who called his harmless art a crime. The Saxon understood not the traditional strains of the bards, and the music of the Gaelic poetry was wasted on his ear; the ruthless hand of a tyrant was stained with the tuneful blood of the bards: the only surviving one who escaped his grasp was he who approached the border tower. The stately tower of Newark to which

the bard now drew near was situated on the romantic borders of Scotland and had been a favorite resort of the minstrels in the "piping times of peace." Fatigued with the journey and chilled with cold he sought a resting place. The cot of a woodsman would have been preferred to the castle of a duchess; but in vain with "wishful eye" he gazed for an humble refuge. It was with hesitating step he passed the embattled portal arch, as he recollected that minstrels did not come to Branksome hall in days which were passed scorned like him. In former days those "jovial priests of mirth and war" came alike prepared for the feast or the fight. The lordly owners of castles felt it to be their duty to invite those sons of song to the banquet who in the front ranks of martial clans had blown the war note in the battle. Those who pretended to be the descendants of heroic warriors heard with pleasure the praises of their ancestors; and whether at the festal board where the bright wine flowed fast and free, or at the funeral procession where the step was slow and solemn alike were the ancestral praises sung to the assembled clans. As the last of the bards mused over those things in his mind, "thought what was now and what had been," although sad he was not bereft of hope; for he also recollected that although the ponderous gates and massy bars of Branksome had oft rolled back the tide of war that they were never closed against the poor and desolate. He was received in that ducal hall with all the kindness his situation and wants required. The owner of the castle had herself when in the bloom of beauty, known what it was to suffer adversity. When kindness had supplied the wants of the aged man his minstrel pride arose, he tells his hostess that he knew full many a tale concerning her forefathers the old warriors of Buccleugh; and if she would listen to his strain, although his hands were stiff, and his voice weak, he thought even yet that he could make music to her ear. His boon being granted and an ancient strain recalled, soon his faded eye was lighted up with all the ecstasy of a poet. The scene that was present before him, the lot that awaited him; the toils he had endured the cold diffidence of the world, and the frost of age were all lost in the full tide of song. His glowing thought supplied what he lacked in memory, and his harp rung responsive to his voice, as he related

to the duchess the deeds of her fathers. He pours forth into the ears of that listening throng, the ancient customs observed in their border tower, he sings of warriors who neither quitted their armor by day nor night, warriors who slept in laced corslets, with their heads pillowed on cold bucklers, warriors who surrounded the festive board their hands covered with gloves of steel;

"And they drank the red wine through helmet barred."

The rude turrets of that border tower shook and rung with his legendary song. He sings the manners of times long since changed—the deeds of chiefs in the feudal war, and tells how the wreaths for which champions bled, have become faded since they became twined round the head of some new minions. The dames applaud the hoary minstrel's strain and his lonely condition was pitied by the duchess. She marvels much that his pilgrimage should be so hard in his helpless age without a friend to advise, a daughter to cheer, or a son to guide him on his rugged way. Her sympathy has touched his heart. He stoops his head and busies himself with the strings of his harp to hide the big tear that would fain fall from his eye, he would fain give utterance to the notes of woe that are sounding on the strings of his heart, as he remembers his brave and only boy who had fallen by the side of the great Dundee. He modestly informs the high dames around him that his own race were not cowards, his son had died with the conquering chieftain of his clan, and he himself had

"—seen war's lightning flashing,
Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing,
Seen through red blood the war horse dashing,
And scorned amid the reeling strife,
To yield a step for death or life."

As the wild notes of his harp sweep along the side of the mountain and die in the glen beneath, he is bade to tell how it is that one who played so well should wander such a poor and thankless soil, when a foreign land would better reward him for his music. This was too much for him to bear; he could not listen unmoved to the scornful jeer which mis-

prized his native land, and he gives an answer to the question in that patriotic stanza which begins the sixth canto of his lay. Nursed amid the stern mountains of Caledonia; hushed to sleep by the blast which swept through her woods; and cradled in her heath, no wonder the scenery of his country had knit a band—which bound him to the land of his sires—too strong for mortal hand to untie. To wander alone by the streams of Yarrow—feel the breeze which came down the braes of Ettrick; and above all to lay his head by “Tiviot stone” were thoughts which gave him greater pleasure than all the rewards he might receive from English hands. Hushed is the harp, the minstrel has concluded his lay. Do you ask, reader, Did this high dame permit him to depart alone to linger out his pilgrimage in indigence and age? No—she did not wait till his genius had become churchyard clay before she felt for his past agonies; she did not wait till he was dead and then erect a monument and hold a festival on the banks of the Tweed to his memory. She left it for others who came after her to use a poet in this manner at the banks of the Doon. Close beneath the proud tower of Newark arose a bower for the minstrel. There he oft related the tale of other days to the sheltered wanderers who sat around his cheerful hearth. It was his delight to throw open his door and give that aid to the traveller which he before had begged. In this manner he passed his winter’s day; and when summer with its balmy breath waved the blue bells on the heath of Newark; and when from his little garden which was hedged with green, the song of the thrush would be heard, the soul of the aged harper would awake;

“Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;
And noble youths the strain to hear
Forsook the hunting of the deer;
And Yarrow as he rolled along,
Bore burden to the minstrel’s song.”

The race of the bards is now extinct; the last of the tuneful brethren has laid his head by the stone of Tiviot, his feet have long since ceased to wander by the romantic

streams of his beloved Yarrow ; the sound of the harp is heard no more on the borders. Hush ! did we say the sound of the harp was heard no more ? We erred. Go enter " Dryburgh's mouldering pile ;" stand within that ruined fane, beside " Saint Mary's grated aisle," and there in that quiet and sequestered spot when there is not a voice to be heard on the gale ; not a breath to stir the leaves above you, nor a murmur to be heard from the Tweed that calmly rolls below, at such a time place yourself on the " mighty wizard's grave," and you may there hear the echoes of harps chiming through the silence of departed years. Those harps are sounding a dirge more piteous than aught that ever thrilled from earthly instrument. The airy anthem that floats around you is a requiem over the dust of Walter Scott ;

" The last of all the bards was he,
Who sung of border chivalry."

J. S.

TO MY SISTER.

I loved thee, ah, too deeply loved thee,
My little sister dear,
And when the hand of God removed thee,
What though I saw the mourning bier,
And many friends were weeping round,
And many a tear came trickling down ;
Though every eye with sorrow quailed,
And every cheek with grief was paled ?
I felt that thou wast near.

And when I looked upon thy face,
I could not shed a tear,
I knew thou wast an angel,
I felt that thou wast near ;
And now—when silent eve around me flings
Her shadows, and memory faithful brings
Back thy form, thy face, thy every look,
And every shade thy features took ;
I feel that thou art near.

Why should I weep to think of thee ?
I know thou art thy Saviour's care,
From every pain and sorrow free,
Why should I wish thee here ?
But when thy mother's heart is pained,
When her cheek with tears is stained,
Hasten, sister, hasten here,
Whisper comfort in her ear,
And she will smile that thou art near.

W.

HONOR.

OF the vast majority of men, there are, probably few, even of the most insignificant, or of the most blunted sensibilities, who would not feel indignant if refused the title of honorable men; and yet, no character is more rare. In Fiction, with the honorable man on every page; his lineaments are exceedingly well drawn, and, without difficulty, we recognise him as an old acquaintance, whose upright bearing long since won our hearts, and whose stern and uncompromising views of abstract right and wrong, have placed him high in our esteem; there is a perfection about him singularly captivating, especially to the young and the innocent. Turning, however, from the world of Fancy to the world of Fact; from pleasurable intoxicating dreamings, and vain imaginings, to life's painful realities, and the honorable man, our familiar friend, the fine character we so love and esteem, has disappeared like the gorgeously tinted visions of youthful fancy, or the evanescent glories of an evening sky. We search for him with anxious faces amongst the busy crowd, and diligently scrutinize each countenance. With throbbing hearts we turn to the more contracted circle of our friends, to those whose hands have grasped our own, and who have sworn to deal with us as true men, but the honorable man is absent. We look within, and tremblingly examine our own hearts, but our tongues falter, and we hesitate to look in 'Heaven's high face' and confidently declare—we are honorable men.

We would not be misunderstood. Without doubt there are thousands, who, in the general acceptance of the term,

are high-minded, honorable men; whose characters, in the eyes of the world, (and what other eyes are worth mentioning) are unsullied by the slightest stain; who, unquestionably have clean hands and pure hearts. Many fond souls there are, who so love their own dear selves, as to imagine that whatever *they* do must, from the very constitution of things, be most honorable. With such characters, of course, we would not meddle, but let them delusively sleep on.

But we may inquire, where is man honorable? Is not he entitled to the appellation whose conduct is the same when all eyes are upon him, (and who would not then be so?) as when no earthly eye views his actions? whose breast is the abode of none but honorable and upright thoughts and feelings; jealous of his honor, alike when no temptation is offered him, and when powerful and persuasive temptations to dishonor assail him?

We live in an age, when honor, both as to men and deeds is most cultivated, if perchance, we could credit all we see and hear; when the paths of honor are most crowded with disinterested pilgrims; and when no paucity of worshippers meets our eye as we gaze upon the altars reared to Purity and Virtue; but alas, the honorable of this age, can bear no comparison with those noble souls, who, albeit they lived in an era fraught with gloom, would scorn to touch the hands of the noble great-hearts of our own day and generation.

The manners of the present age, are democratic, even to excess, and there is a freedom pervading society, in all its ramifications, which we would fain hope, bodes no evil; for we would laugh at the fool so sensitive, as to imagine he should not give his hand and plight his faith to any but those whose characters were well known; "put money in thy purse" is still a sovereign specific for elevating us to honor and respectability, though we drew our pedigree from a hangman. But the days of chivalry are over, and no Douglass now draws himself proudly up, and spurns a Marmion's hand; on the contrary, the motto of the times is—"Who's too mean to grasp my hand, who's so base I may not hail him brother." We may point to a man who has left no command of the decalogue unbroken; whose hand still reeks with the blood of his friend; who had deliberately mingled poison in his brother's cup; and who has, with a villain hand stabbed

at his country's reputation; but, thanks to the genius of the age, we can still say "Brutus is an honorable man."

Nor, we regret to say, is the lack of high-toned honorable feeling entirely individual in its manifestations. Sovereign states esteem it no stain on their escutcheon, but rather glory in repudiation; and covenanted treaties, however solemnly ratified, have lost their sacred character; yet who feels dejected at his country's dishonor, or blushes at the reproaches cast upon her? Vain inquiry! the sons of the Pilgrims, as a race, hold their heads more erect, and gaze upon each other with more intense admiration, in proportion to their ability to defraud and their skill at overreaching. And however painful it is, inexorable Truth compels us to acknowledge, that through the length and breadth of our land, there has been a sad lapse of high-minded, noble perceptions of honor.

E. E.

THE PILGRIM.

Pilgrim! Travel-stained and weary,
Stay, and listen to the voice
Of the flowers, dewy herald,
From the land of Flora's choice.
He hath knelt 'mid breathing roses,
Loitering in his flowery way,
Kissed the myrtle-shaded maidens
Stealing from the glare of day.

Morn and Eve, he ever cometh
To our halls with rustling sound;
Laden with the dew-born odors
From the dreamy fields around.
Pilgrim! stay; those halls are open;
Linger till the night is fled;
In the incense-clouded chambers,
Pillowing thy weary head.

Loose-zoned maid! I may not linger,
Though I list the zephyr's sighs,
Or among thy sisters, gazing
In the chaos of their eyes,

A diviner voice is sounding,
Round me from the distant goal;
Fairer forms e'en now are flitting
O'er the mirror of the soul.

Dreamer! From the groves of Athens—
From the villa by the sea—
From the quaint and echoing chambers,
Of the schools' Philosophy;
Wisdom's everlasting Priesthood
Issuing, like thee, have gone
To the ether-circled temple,
Visioned in the dim unknown.

Of the myriads onward thronging,
With the burning hopes of youth,
Who hath ever yet returned
To unveil the face of Truth;
Hark! I hear the answer, coming
From the Idol's groaning car;
Look! I see the answer, flaming
In the broken front of war.

Fair Logician! Words are idle,
Though thy martyrs bid me stay,
I may fall; I will not falter;
Dying, like them, in the way.
Through the rifted clouds above us,
On my path, with changeful dyes,
Uncreated light is shining,
From the presence of the skies.

SYMPTOMS.

COMING events cast their shadows before them. The reddening sky of morn betokens the approaching dawn of day; and while the sun is yet far below the horizon, ruddy tints naturally lead the eye to turn to the east, awaiting the arrival of the king of day. In nature, there are no spasmodic actions; no sudden fits or starts. The whole mechanism is

regulated by fixed laws, written on the page of the great lawgiver's open volume. They are stamped on every atom, which moves or which is at rest—whispered in the action of every zephyr which fans the cheek, and spoken in the notes of omnipotence, as from the very throne of God, in every blast of the reverberating thunder. The veriest schoolboy now knows that there is no such thing as chance—that there is a fixed, firm, unalterable purpose, in all we see around us. The tender bud, the blooming flower; the decaying seed-cup; succession of seasons, and of years; of night and day; of morn and eve; all proclaim like successions, which are yet to come. It requires no prophetic eye to tell of the doings of to-morrow in relation to the kingdom of nature. The rusty key of past experience can easily open the mystic portals of the future.

No less true is this in relation to the moral and political world. The revolutions which stand like landmarks, in the progress of the race, were not sudden or impetuous. They were the results of long, subdued thought, aided by the restless activity of persecuted men. They were the natural products of a struggle against ignorance and bigotry; heedlessly fostered by the power which they sought to undermine and destroy. The causes of great revolutions are not to be found in the immediate vicinity of the effects, which they produced. They are not unfrequently to be sought for in some former time. There are indeed sometimes cases in which, the cause and the effect seem almost simultaneous—in which the cry of the oppressed has not ceased to echo among the hills, before it is followed by the wailings of the oppressor; but though sometimes the flash of the vivid lightning meets our eye, at the same time, that the terrible report of its effect reaches our ears; yet still oftener, the thunder tarries behind the liquid fire, enabling us distinctly to distinguish between them. There is no quivering of the muscle; no sudden jarring of the nerve, in any part of healthy life. All is indeed regular which bears the impress of truth. Now and then, there may be some sudden brightness; some truant aurora borealis; some mimic sunlight; these may dazzle the observer for a moment; but they are counterfeits; they cannot stand the approach of day. The laws of moral revolutions, are as firmly fixed as those of the physical world.

The law of gravitation is not more deeply impressed upon every atom of the physical world, than is the law of the omnipotence of right, engraven upon the heart of every man that breathes. All great revolutions have been preceded by some yearnings, as it were for the truth; some passing devotion to the morning stars, while the devotees have been awaiting the rising sun. The astrologer of old looking out on the vast heavens, powdered with the diamond dust of the skies; was said to tell from them to the wondering populace, the fortunes and destinies of them all. He fancied he saw in the aspects of the planets, the downfall of one man's favorite hopes; the rise of another's ardent desires. He was appealed to, by all, and with an eye of faith, while they looked, where he seemed to look; they received with an ear of faith, what he declared he saw, but what was hidden from their more feeble vision. So we have among us now, those who would look not above upon dust of the heavens, but below upon the animated dust of earth; and from their actions would tell of the destinies of the race. They would map out the species, like as the ancients mapped out the skies. Here is some bright star, Jupiter-like coursing through ether, attended by admiring satellites. Here some fixed sun sends its beaming ray, eclipsing time and space, as it were from unknown, preadamite worlds. Here grouped together, stand some gorgon-headed sisters—inexorable, as they are full of wrath. Here some gallant Perseus trips along, with his rescued Andromeda. Here some stalwart Hercules, stalks by clothed in his Lernæan skin; balancing with equal poise, the heavy club and the triple-headed dog of Pluto. Here some sister Pleiades weep forth their silvery tear; and here some bacchanalian centaur tosses in the abject pride of beastly revelry. Thus every nation can be figured under some one of the fabulous constellations of antiquity. We wish all God speed, who engage in that noble work of philosophic history. We look with pride up to those who trace the moral progress of the race; who write not of revolutions, effected alone by brute force, but of those achieved by paid thought and restless exertion.

We frankly confess that we have no sympathy with those mawkish moralists who forbid all improvement because of interference with established rules. We give no credence

to the faith of those who would subject to an inquisitorial ordeal, every new proposal, and would either thumb-screw and rack it into servile obedience to its dogmas, or placing it upon some Procrustean bedstead, would hack down its fair proportions to its standard of beauty and truth. We have not forgotten the "but it does more" of the Italian; or that the English prelate was a wavering martyr; nor can we forget, that fire, sword, and the rack may appear to induce a temporary belief; but that ardent, hoping, persevering faith is the offspring of deliberation and freewill alone. Neither can we agree with the devout man of science, who declares, that if the nebular hypothesis of Laplace does not coincide with our present interpretation of the scripture, then we must make away with the sublime generalization of Laplace; we would rather remember that there is an unity in truth—that truth in the Strand at London, is truth among the sands of the Sahara. Men and morals may change; truth never. She is eternal; a reflection of the Deity; omnipotent, inflexible, unwavering. We have not forgotten the pious horror of the godly matron, as evinced in the cry against the researches of the first geologists. Yet geology is among the most potent of all co-workers with revelation, as yet discovered by the ingenuity of man. It is one of the stoutest, finest, healthiest offspring of human research and human reason. We would rather say with "the eclectic of France," that there is a repose, a quietness, a cheerful trust, a blessed assurance in the mind, which has passed from unreflecting dogmas, to enlightened faith; in the enjoyment of which it calmly looks on every free and earnest working of *the intellect* in pursuit of truth; confident that truth is always consistent with itself; and that no genuine expression of the Deity can be set aside by any human discovery.

With respect to such persons as we have mentioned, while we pity their mistakes, we honor their motives. Not so however with relation to another class of the same species; those who are forever bickering at the age in which they live; men who think they have achieved much, when they have scribbled their names on the dust which clusters thick on some antiquity; whose poetry is the vapid tinkling of alliterating doggrel; whose golden age is the times of Don Quixottes and Sancho Panzas; whose true gentleman is some Front

de Beuf. These are they who would not only put a stop to advancement, but who would even turn our faces back again. They would fain place the race where it stood one thousand years ago. They have not drunk in their inspiration from the pure streams of modern lore; but while they have neglected the refreshing soul-invigorating draughts at the bottom, have feasted but on the noxious vapors which rise from the surface of the wells of the Stagyrite, or the "golden fountains of Plato." They would forbid us to disturb the mould and dust of time, which clusters thick and deep over the monuments of antiquity; and forgetting that "distance lends enchantment to the view," fancy in the bleak mountain Olympus of those regions, some gentle Parnassi; or see in the turbid Tiber, the sweet placid waters of Helicon. To such as these we would say, as we would say to all malcontents; if you despise the triumphs of civilization, and desire a state of what you falsely call nature, but we call barbarism, remove to Hottentot-land; or if you wish to welcome back the darkness of the middle ages, migrate to Otaheite and indoctrinate its inhabitants into the mysteries of a lazy knight-hood, and teach them the science of lovesick rhyme. There when you have hugged your delusive idea of the fixedness of the race; develope the beauty which lies innate in your souls; create a Venus de Medici, without having feasted in the loveliness of female form; and erect another Parthenon—a type of beauty—without having seen a temple or heard of a true and omnipresent God, except as revealed and personified in your own immaculate selves. There no hideous "wooden heads" shall disturb your crazy equilibrium; there no utilitarian Yankee shall turn your Helicons into millponds; there no philanthropist shall obtrude his temperance pledge upon your intoxicated sight, but one continual freedom from legal wigs and utilitarian architects shall attend your residence in that land, where all geese shall be swans; where all floods shall be but tides of ardent spirits; all plants tobacco and opium; all language Germanic gibberish; all worship self-idolization and self-deification. But so long as you remain among us, you should pay some little respect to the age in which you live; and remember, that all must be so utilitarian as to admit that we are not chameleons and cannot feed on air.

We had intended, when we took up our pen to commence this article, to ask the question, What were now the signs of the times? To ask the watchman, what of the night? But our episode has become a poem in itself; and each one must interpret for himself the answer as our sentinel bids us look at Germany with a second Luther; at Russia, with another Peter; at France, with Fourier, Sand and Sue; at England, with Chartism; at Prussia, with a written constitution; at the awakening of oriental civilization; at the increase of female education; at the host of lesser luminaries, which stud the grey canopy of morn. Why should we attempt to shut our own eyes, and to blindfold those of others, as if to prevent the sun from shining out upon the world? or why abuse men, who most earnestly seek for truth, because forsooth they wear not the livery of our faith? Then let us not join the surly clan, whose faces are ever turned backward, while they are dragged onward by the crowd. We must not forget, that the delightful music of the spheres, chaunting in the kingly orb of day, while it wakes the sweetest notes of the tender songster of the night, often prompts the grimmest howls from the snappish, snarling cur—the laziest perhaps, that ever lolled before the mansion of some sentimental boarding-school miss, or fed upon the “water-gruel,” which some dainty Lord has exiled from his table. There is a homely saw about puppies nine days old, barking at the sun; from which even men impregnated with beauty, might learn a useful lesson.

AMBITION, A VIRTUOUS PRINCIPLE.

MAN is now a frail, imperfect being. Originally created in the image of his maker, he was endowed with qualities which were calculated to minister to his happiness, and to direct and urge him on to the attainment of the grand end of his existence. The fatal calamity of the fall, however, marred and beclouded the beauty of the divine personification. Many of those noble powers and aspirations which

were the glory of his being, and which raised him from earth towards heaven, are become tainted by the corruption, and often turned into instruments of evil. But amid all that at first may appear only dangerous and forbidding, a closer attention may discover that which is worthy of the highest admiration and esteem. As truth is dug, like a treasure, from a huge mass of error, so the brightest virtue is often found amid the darkest vices. It is a common observation, that "vice often assumes virtue's garb and palms herself off for virtue's self;" and why should it not be equally true, that, instead of assuming virtue's garb, she should also often conceal this fair goddess by her own loathsome apparel? "All is not gold that shines," neither is that all dross that does not shine.

In judging of any quality or principle of human nature, it is not sufficient to examine its dark or its bright side merely, to let the mind dwell only on one set of results. Such, however, is too often the mode of procedure. And the imagination—the ever ready instrument of a partial or one side view—seizes on, magnifies, and gives a false coloring to those facts that are made the objects of observation. Thus some principles are denounced, in general terms, as the sources of evil only, and the offspring of depraved and sinful nature; while others are lauded to perfection. But the truth is, man in his present condition is wholly a compound of good and evil. If no principle of the soul has escaped the corruption of his nature, it is also true that there is none which has become wholly vitiated, or that does not retain some marks or impressions of its original design, and of its true character.

In surveying the history of the world, we every where meet with a powerful principle more or less at work, influencing and determining most of its great transactions, but ever and anon manifesting itself in most terrible forms. In terror and abhorrence, it is often denounced as evil and only evil. Oh Ambition! thou God of all evil and severest scourge of man! is the cry of the warm-hearted benevolent philanthropist. The zeal of his heart has disabled him from seeing anything there but what is loathsome and abhorrent. But what to him affords an object of such terror and awe only, will furnish the more philosophical mind with a subject

pleasing and sublime, as well as awful. He will see there much of the true dignity of human nature. While he views the mighty powers of the soul sweeping all things before them with the force of the tempest, he has also the pleasure of contemplating a godlike spirit bursting the bonds that would hold it fast to the mean and paltry trifles of the sordid vulgar. He may indeed lament, that such powers and aspirations are not directed to more worthy ends; but he is far from despising or loathing these qualities themselves. He views them as among the noblest of our nature, in such instances under the direction of a misguiding and corrupt heart. He sees that principles of the soul, like those of external nature, noble and estimable in themselves, and designed for glorious purposes, may be influenced and directed to unwise ends. But he does not esteem them the less for that.

We hold that the principle of ambition, or in other words, the desire of eminence, is not only in itself a virtuous principle, but emanated from the noblest sources. 'The generality of men have all their attention and desires absorbed in the grovelling affairs of sense. They can scarcely find time, or lack the inclination to bestow a serious reflection on any higher destiny. Speak to them of an eternity of moral and intellectual action, throughout the endless ages of which the meanest and weakest capacity is to progress in continued approximation to its infinite and incomprehensible author, and their dull and sensual minds scarcely receive an impression from the sublime and astounding fact. Sentiments like this sound to them more like the adventurous wanderings of a high wrought imagination. Their highest conceptions of bliss amount to little else than a heathen or Mohammedan paradise. Esau-like, for a mere mess of pottage, for the vile gratification of sordid sense they are willing to sell their splendid birthright. Thus it is with the great mass. But this is not the fact in relation to all. Many, though they may not fully realize have some just conceptions of the dignity and importance of their nature. Mark the change. The consequence is a deep and an earnest longing after something more than mere physical, temporal good. The divinity within them, awakened from its slumbers, becomes strong and lively in its promptings. Its operations, however, are various. These may be determined by the moral prin-

ciples by which it is acted upon and influenced. If these be narrow, selfish and corrupted, a worldly or selfish ambition is the manifestation of this mental and spiritual principle triumphing over the *mere* sensual and physical. If the pure, comprehensive and lofty affections of the soul predominate, it will be manifested in a more virtuous course. Eminence is the grand aim and object of every mind freed from the shackles which would confine its operations to the ephemeral affairs and enjoyments of time and sense. The mind on becoming conscious of its powers and capacities is strongly and instinctively prompted to develope and exercise them in the attainment of some lofty end. This is the law of its nature. Let a man once catch a glimpse of his real self and he is scarcely any longer the same being. What once pleased and satisfied becomes comparatively disgusting; or, at least, is regarded no longer as an end, but merely a means.

Far indeed is this principle the characteristic merely of depraved and sinful nature. We find it in human nature, when in its original and perfect state. How ingeniously did the subtle fiend lay hold of it, and by alluring it by false and tempting representations, accomplish his hellish purpose against our first parents! It was the delusive prospect of becoming like God that drew forth the hand that plucked the forbidden fruit. But had no such principle existed in the human soul, how could it have afforded a foundation for the tempter's plot? And if it did exist, it was good and virtuous, for man was created in the image of God and free from all sin and vice.

The design of this which men call ambition undoubtedly is to draw off the attention of man from the mere sensual and urge him to the exercise and development of the mental and spiritual. Influenced by its powerful promptings man shrinks from obscurity as from dark annihilation. Upwards! onwards! is its motto. Is not this truly one of the noblest qualities of our nature? By it the soul is expanded and elevated. Does it not point to infinitude? Because through perversion this divine principle has often been bodied forth in fearful forms, is there any more reason for discouraging and crushing it than there is for warring against or extinguishing any other principle of our nature? On the same ground the whole constitution of the soul would have to be

obliterated and destroyed. Nay, let it answer its high and heavenly mission. Crush it, and there is left but the bare remnant of a man, a little more than a mere brute. Train it, make it the object of careful and solicitous attention and culture, bring to bear upon it the proper influences, draw out pure and generous affections to act in unison with it, direct it to the proper objects, and there need be little fear as to the result.

It is no less lamentable to consider that such a noble principle should be frequently so effectually damped and crushed than that it should be subject to perversion. The causes which lead to this may be various. We shall mention but one, which seems to us to be amongst the most pernicious. This consists in a wrong or indistinct view of the established principles that regulate and govern human affairs. Many will not recognise the intimate and almost absolute dependence of matters on their own agency. Others are disposed to acknowledge this, but their conviction seems not sufficiently strong to be firm and abiding, and serve as an actuating principle at all times—in fortune and misfortune, success and failure. They may indeed set out towards some lofty attainment. Their efforts may not have been spared. But driven back and discouraged by unforeseen and appalling difficulties, they are disposed to sit down in despair and deplore the hardness of their lot. The envious success of others is attributed to blind chance, favorable circumstances, or an inevitable fate. And thus they attempt to appease a disappointed mind, while it is often too effectually lulled, if not into a state of entire listlessness, yet into a fatal lack of all true energy and force. And thus the salutary influence which disappointments and difficulties ought to have exerted, is not only entirely lost, but a most fatal contrary effect is produced.

FLEXIBILITY.

AMONG all the traits of character about which essayists and moralists have written, none has passed more unnoticed than that of flexibility. Its antipode, firmness, they are wont

to eulogize in the most enthusiastic terms, as constituting the summum bonum of excellence. But the former they have wholly disregarded, except that, when exhibiting it in contradistinction to the latter, they have stigmatized it with the false appellations of weakness, cowardice, and cringing sycophancy. It were as just to call firmness obstinacy and self-will. Neither characteristic deserves to be thus slandered. That firmness of character is so extolled while flexibility is decried is because the former is sweet while the latter is offensive to the human ear. There is something peculiarly congenial and flattering to human pride in overcoming by resistance or falling before opposing circumstances. Man would rather force than persuade—constrain by exercise of power than ‘stoop to conquer.’ It is doing injustice to those who are observing and studying character for exemplary models, to laud one of these at the expense of the other—to commend one so highly while the merits of the other are overlooked or disparaged. One should not be robbed of its laurels to deck the brow of the other. In a well-balanced character, neither exists independently of the other. Flexibility without firmness is imbecility, and the latter without the former is stubbornness. One should modify the extremes of the other. A character in which firmness predominates may suit certain times and some places, but one which can change with every vicissitude of circumstances—from firm to flexible and from flexible to firm—will suit all times and all places; and is more uniformly successful in accomplishing the end proposed. An eminent example of the former may be seen in Luther, of the latter in Paul. The firmness of Luther was well suited to the peculiar period and state of the times in which he lived and labored. He was doubtless raised up and fitted for them by the hand of an all-wise providence. Religion was incrustated with forms and ceremonies. Pomp and pageantry had taken the place of piety in the church, or the vital spark smouldered beneath the rubbish of error. Blinded by ignorance and held in terrified subjection to papal power, the people had ceased to strive to rise, and had sunk back into a spiritual sleep of deathlike apathy. Such was Europe in the fifteenth century. The place, the period, and the condition of the people demanded a character which had the firmness to brave the in-

solence of power, confront the oppressor and encourage the oppressed. The ignorant needed to be guided in quest of truth. Others needed to be made sensible of the yoke by which they were galled and that their backs were the hobbies of "burdens grievous to be borne." All, frowned down by power and afraid to act, needed some one who possessed the firmness to withstand the consequences, and the moral courage to lead them forward in the march of reform. Such was Luther, and prosperity attended his efforts to diffuse the truth and advance the cause of spiritual freedom. At a different period and under different circumstances he might have been less successful. His unyielding firmness might have been regarded as stubbornness—his moral courage as rash temerity—his unabated ardor in pursuit of his end as fanatical zeal—and thus his great enterprise have proved abortive.

But Paul, whose flexibility enabled him to become all things to all men, possessed a character as well adapted to the modern as to the primitive ages of the church—to times of corruption as times of purity—to the period of Christianity's noon-tide glory as that of its first dawn. When firmness was necessary to the furtherance of the holy enterprise to which he was devoted, he could exercise it; and to how great extent his imprisonments, stripes, buffetings, bruises with stones, and "deaths oft" will testify. But, when he could do it without too great a sacrifice of principle, and could direct it to some good end, he did not disdain to yield some unimportant or favorite prepossession, and even to appeal to if not to flatter the prejudices of others; for example, the mythology of the Greeks and the traditionary rites of the Jews. And, in receiving the Gentiles into the church, he surrendered a prejudice which he had been taught to regard as important from his youth, but which stood in the way of the attainment of a paramount good. Consequently, success crowned his labors, in all places, as well among the learned Greeks and the ignorant barbarians, as the pharisaical Jews. Had he uniformly exercised the unbending firmness and rigid tenacity which characterized Luther they would have proved prejudicial if not fatal, humanly speaking, to the propagation of the Christian religion, and confined his influence to the narrow limits of the Holy Land.

This is not intended to derogate from the character of Luther. It was good, but that of Paul was better. In the former, firmness had the ascendancy—in the latter, neither; but both existed in a happy equilibrium, enabling him to be at once firm or flexible, as his circumstances required.

Half the proud deeds and lofty achievements ascribed to firmness have been indirectly the offspring of flexibility. As great ends have been attained and as great good accomplished by falling in with and finally controlling and directing a current of events to a salutary purpose, as by resisting it; which too often only dams it up, for the time, and prepares it at length to break away and rush on with accumulated violence, carrying desolation and destruction in its impetuous torrent.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood,
Leads on to fortune;"

and he who opposes it will be overwhelmed by its waves, while he who yields will be wafted safely upon its bosom. In times of public excitement and amid the tumult of faction and anarchy, there may throughout the annals of history, be found here and there one who has subdued their turbulence by obstinate resistance; but, in a majority of instances, such a course has rendered its author the victim of their rage. Whereas those who have yielded for a time have either ultimately prevailed and overruled them for good, or escaped unharmed by their violence. "So when a tempest sweeps over the land, the mountain oak, proud in its strength and unyielding in its firmness is prostrated upon the ground; while the tough and vigorous withe bows in its flexibility, and is spared in its wrath."

A LUNCH AT SMITH'S;

BEING A SEQUEL TO THE "BREAKFAST AT ROGERS'."

Who has not heard of Mrs. Smith—the elegant and accomplished Mrs. Smith—the friend of Johnson and Goldsmith, and at one time the leader of the literary circles of

London? I should not like to be the one whose ignorance on this point had to be confessed. Her public career is so familiar, and what is known of her in private so eagerly sought after, that any further particulars respecting her, will, I doubt not, be highly acceptable to the readers of this magazine. It was my fortune when a young man to receive an invitation to one of her "lunches." This honor was conferred upon me through the kindness of my friend David Garrick, who was then at the very highest pitch of his popularity—and I can never forget the impressions of that visit should I live a thousand years. I had been looking over the papers in the library of the British Museum, and was strolling along on my way to the Traveller's Club, when I was overtaken by Garrick, who putting his arm through mine proposed going to Mr. Smith's. Turning into Oxford street, we soon reached her mansion. There was no outward show of that gaudy kind which marks the residence of the parvenu—the house was built of a dark gray stone and the colored panes of glass concealed the drapery of the curtains within. The door seemed to open of itself, to our ring—and passing through a magnificent hall crowded with antique statuary and hung with the best specimens of the great masters, we were ushered into the principal drawing room, where I was presented to Mrs. Smith. She was engaged at the time I entered in an animated conversation with Sir Walter Scott and Dante, but left them, and with a most winning smile welcomed me as "a friend." In an instant I was at my ease, so great is the power of unaffected good breeding. In a few moments she was called away to receive some new comers, and I was left with Garrick, who was now joined by Macready, to examine the persons in the room. The part of the room to which my attention was first directed by the hum of voices, was a refreshment table nearest the door by which I had entered the room. Seated at it were five or six men engaged in what seemed to be a violent debate. The person at that instant speaking was a tall slender man dressed in the height of the mode. His pale forehead rendered still whiter by the black piercing eye and long straight eyebrow of the same color. His voice was musical and his intonations the most captivating. I involuntarily asked his name, and the feelings I experienced can better be imagined than described

when the name of Dr. Samuel Johnson was mentioned. And who are those with whom he is conversing? That person next him, with the sallow complexion and military dress is Washington the American General. Next to him, leaning upon his elbows with a mournful cast of countenance is Washington Irving, another American, a nephew of the General. Opposite, with the deep scar on his face and his arm in a sling, is Robespierre, author of Alison's History of Europe. "But" said I, "are there no others of the English besides Johnson whose names are known so well by their writings?" "Come with me," said Macready "and you shall see." Taking his arm, we sauntered through the rooms till we had reached the extreme end of the suite. Here seated, some on chairs, others on ottomans, others reclining on the rich divans, which ran all round the room were gathered a set of men who from their appearance would not have excited the slightest attention in Bond Street. We seated ourselves, and I gave myself up to the pleasing amusement of imagining who these might be. There were two gentlemen discussing the Oregon question in a loud tone of voice and with violent gesticulation. Those said Macready, are Dryden and Pope. Pope is to read an essay on Man to-night, which he has just written, when you will see him to more advantage. Chesterfield sat nearer to me. He had that morning received Dr. Johnson's letter in reference to the dedication of his dictionary, and seemed in no pleasant humor. He was conversing with Madame De Stael and Dr. Noah Webster on the merits of the latter's dictionary, to which he said he gave the decided preference. But I accounted for this from the fact that he wished to be complimentary to Webster, and at the same time mortify Dr. Johnson. Byron, Edgar A. Poe, Milton, and David Hume, seemed to be searching the maps for the seat of the Sikh war—but giving this up, Mr. Poe ventured upon a critical analysis of the Raven, proving that the difficulties overcome in its composition were equal to the physical obstructions in making the Thames Tunnel. While thus engaged, Mrs. Smith came to introduce me to Macauley the Edinburgh Reviewer. Macauley was a man at this time of about fifty years of age. Large and raw-boned, with a profusion of red hair and a low narrow forehead from under which his deep black eyes shot forth rays

indicative of the mind which whether directing the pen or leading the debate in the House, alike renders him so pre-eminent. On my name being mentioned, he rose, slightly bowed, and gave me his hand to kiss, this being the fashion of the times. Our conversation turned upon matters of general literature. He said literature was receding while the fine arts advanced—he spoke of Bailey's *Festus*, then just out, and expressed high admiration for it. Bishop Burnet he told me would shortly publish an account of his own times, that he had read parts of it, and feared he gave Napoleon too much credit for his successes. Here, said he, is Madame Roland, leaning on the arm of Voltaire; allow me to present you. Voltaire, who speaks the English almost as well as his native German, conversed for a few minutes and left us to join a circle of scientific men, amongst whom I noticed Faraday, Franklin, Sir Humphrey Davy, and Wollaston. As the wine began to affect their heads, the company became more lively. The Archbishop Laud and the Duke of Wellington sang a duett, accompanied by Mozart on the piano with Coleman's *Æolian* attachment. After which Hail Columbia and the Marseilles Hymn were successively sung by the great American general and Napoleon. At three o'clock we broke up. Mrs. Hemans drove me to my lodgings in her carriage, and invited me to go with her the following day, which was Good Friday, to hear the Hon. Baptist W. Noel preach. I reserve other interviews for subsequent papers.

A WISH.

Musing oft at stillest hour of even,
'Tis thus I've breathed a prayer to Heaven.

Oh! give me a girl with a flashing eye,
With a tender heart, but a spirit high;
With a dimpled cheek and a soft sweet voice,
To bid my heart for awhile rejoice.

With a fairy step and a winning grace,
As the bounding fawn in the merry chase ;
With a pouting lip and a wooing smile,
Life of my joys, and my ills to beguile.

With flowing hair and a neck of snow,
With a lily hand and a pearly brow,
With a breast ne'er heaving to a sigh,
To gladden me till the day I die.

Пусть

LITERARY NOTICE.

My own Home and Fireside, being illustrative of the speculations of Martin Chuzzlewit & Co., among the Wensom of the Walley of Eden. By Syr. Philadelphia: J. W. Moore.

Books ! books ! There seems to be a growing significancy in the expression, "Books which are books." In this age of bookmaking and bookselling, everything valuable is printed, besides a great deal that is not valuable. Literature is cheap, and the dignity of authorship has become so universal that it is rather an honor to be found without it. This cheapness of literature, by the way, has often puzzled us. Printed paper, we believe, costs less than when unprinted, and we could never account for the fact of the printer's existence, except that it was in the same way as with the venerable matron who bought eggs at eight cents a dozen, and sold them at six, and made a living because her business was *so extensive*.

This is a glorious age of ours, however, and we do not intend to say a word against it. It is good enough for us, however much others may be disposed to vilify it. We glory in its poetry, its science, its enlarged benevolence, in its *utilitarianism* even, and we think it ill becomes any one living in the present, and indebted to its peculiarities for the modicum of greatness which he may happen to have, to lay about him very furiously in satirizing indiscriminately its

petty low general vices, and its broad elevating distinctive principles.

All this, readers, is by way of introduction, and what we wish to introduce is a thing we have just trapped, calling itself "Syr." Stand back gentlemen! Off hats! An author, a live author, never before seen! Come along Syr, set down on your hind-legs. There, now look at him.

Mr. Syr, readers, proposes to edify mankind by the publication of a book, which has written on the cover, "My own Home and Fireside;" He is a would-be acquaintance of Bulwer and the Dickens—and especially devotes himself to the confutation of some of the heretical opinions squirted out in the "Venom of the Walley of Eden." We have not selected him because he is the type of a general class, or the last coil in a long rope of civilization, for he is *sui generis*, and belongs to no classification. We have selected him for himself, and wish our remarks to apply to no one else.

Most of you probably have heard the remark that as all building is not architecture, so all writing is not literature; that no one would pretend to call a recipe for making soap a part of the literature of the language in which it is written. Now it is our earnest desire to bring Mr. Syr's book into the fold of literature, and we do so only on the ground that it does not furnish a single recipe for making soap, though we have searched through from the end to the beginning to find one.

The book itself is nearly as large as the Iliad, or the Principia, but what gives it superiority over such works is its pure originality. Mr. Syr, we said was *sui generis*. So is his book. No one was ever written like it before, and no one, we venture, will ever execute such another, unless Syr himself should again put his brain into the seething pot. The subject is new, or was once; the ideas are new, what there are; and the style is new, or would be if it had any.

What is worthy of particular notice in the composition of the book is its wonderful unity. We remember to have "read Blair once when we was a boy," as also Horace and Aristotle; and thought we imbibed some of their ideas of unity; but never until now did we see their idea actualized.

The one object of the book is the illustration of rascality. It is with reference to this that its sixty-nine chapters, and

about four hundred heroes become a unit. And in the illustration of this one subject the reader cannot but see and admire the author's wonderful knowledge and skill. The source of this knowledge has mightily perplexed us. He could not have derived it from observation. His Gorgons and Griffins and Grimbanes have no counterpart in real life. He might possibly have been favored with an immediate revelation had not the times of visions and miracles gone by. There is another source of knowledge—consciousness; and from a reflection on the operations of his own mind—the principles governing his own conduct, an author may sometimes acquire a clearness and accuracy not otherwise to be obtained.

Although Mr. Syr is a perfect original, yet in the delineation of character he is more like Milton than Shakspeare. In Snappal and Grimbane may be found all the vices of Belial and Mammon, without any of their virtues. The same may be said of his descriptions, though here again he often surpasses Milton. In a single thunder storm he flashes more sulphur than would suffice for Milton's whole hell.

Another excellence not before noticed is the great variety in the midst of his uniformity. This gives the work the characteristic of beauty superadded to its sublimity. A new Hero is introduced in about every chapter, and this constitutes the variety; each is pre-eminent among his fellows as a rogue, and this constitutes the uniformity. One has but to read a single page to imbibe the whole spirit of the book, thus saving an immense amount of time and labor.

The unity of the work seems to be broken by the introduction of Mary Gizzard and Izadore; for these are not his usual characters. The "general consequence" however, is overbalanced by the "particular advantage"—since in these the author has embodied such a conception of female virtue as may safely challenge a comparison with that of the Rebecca of Ivanhoe.

It may be thought strange that a work so skillfully adapted to all refined tastes should not be immediately appreciated. So it seems. Yet Mr. Syr should not be disheartened. It is the fate of genius to be disregarded by the multitude. Mr. Syr will no doubt receive his just dues from posterity, and the argument *a posteriori* we know he has appreciated, and doubtless can and will fully appreciate again.

As it is true that—

"mediocribus esse poetis,
Non concessere columnae,"

So of novels, it is true that there are some which "shop-keepers won't use for wrapping paper."

So much paper have we wasted on Mr. Syr. Let us say in conclusion, that we regard the *literature* of our age as a strong deep tide, and such productions as that before us as the scum which its waves "spit off" as they roll steadily and majestically along.

EDITORS' TABLE.

We make our last bow, most gracious Public. We hail you, as an ancient friend, a fond familiar friend. Long have we catered to your literary appetites. Long have we fed you on the sweets of poetry and offered you, the strong nurture of plain unseasoned prose. We come again, to bid you taste; criticise; and if you can, enjoy. It is the best the market affords. We cannot make wild game out of barnyard fowls; nor palm off even though adorned with culinary French, *à la serche* for 'fresh fish from Helicon.' But books on etiquette tell us that guests, not the host must pass judgment upon the contents of the platters spread before them.

Come then, like honest Hudibras and his squire, let us sit down and unfathom our editorial "hose." Put thy hand "in either the one or t'other magazine." What have you first, most gallant Ralph? "*A Soliloquy on crossing Stony Brook.*" Taste it for yourself.

Suspended! What's suspended but set free
From daily calls to morning prayers?
Tried and convicted lazy? Who says this?
Who'll prove it, at his peril, on my head?
Suspended? I thank you for't. It breaks my chain!
I held some *slack* allegiance till this hour—
But now my time's my own. Smile on my Profs;
I might count the sleeps, the morning naps,
Delicious hunts, sweet enchanting loafs,
I have, in strong determined purpose made,
To spite you in your lazy dignities. * * * *

This hour's work

Will breed much leisure. Look to V——'s, my Profs,
 For there henceforth shall steam in whiskey punches,
 Drinks hot as Tartarus!—wantonry and revel; there
 The bloody Jack, with thirsty dagger drawn
 Shall be; there friendship pledging brother's cup;
 Most glorious Normas with oily smoke are there;
 Till I steal bask upon some moonlight night,
 And Nassau hails my coming with a shout."

"Frisby" has done a good thing at last. Go raise a Te Deum,
 and hang out your sign as an editor of Croly.

Here is "A trip on a Pegasus, from the Monumental City."
 Mount him, Ralpho. Let us see his paces.

"When in my enchanting arm chair,
 O'er the beauties of Wilson I sit,
 And the Major, and Shepherd, and 'mair,'
 Are delighting my soul with their wit;
 Up the stairway, it grieves me to say,
 A footstep comes pat,
 Just like a buck rat,
 When pursued by a cat,
 And stops at my door; what can I say more,
 Than, with much discontent—"Sir, you may enter."

"'Tis then I wend, with gladsome will,
 Right straight to the green window sill,
 And feast my vision on the beauties of nature,
 Especially on the steward's fields of potatoe:
 Then turn my eye, without a sigh
 Towards the spot, (would 'twere my lot),
 Where pretty ——, in rural state,
 Her innocence proves, thence never moves,
 Except to church, leaving me in the lurch," &c.

Hold in there. We have seen enough of him. We don't like the
 breed of your animal, friend S. Though he may be highborn, still
 his ears show him hybred, too.

We are sorry that we are obliged to decline 'The Victim.' Its
 fault lies not in the execution, but the subject is one which is un-
 suited to our magazine. If we were to continue in charge of the
 Nassau Monthly, we would say that we should be glad to hear from
 "E. A. E" again. Somebody has sent us "A Maniac's Lament;"
 the thoughts smack much of Lewis; and if the author be a poet,
 he is an infinitely smaller poet than 'those very small poets, Mr.
 Dryden and Mr. Pope,' to use the language of

that great metaquizzical poet,
 A man of vast merit, though few people know it.

We have received a despatch, in forty one common metre verses, from one "Telegraph," entitled "The Life and Death of a Bachelor." He very coolly tells us that "it is an episode, from an unfinished epic poem;" has the impudence to class himself among the Homers; and complacently and condescendingly calls the Venustian bard, "friend Horace." If the gloomy author meant this for true poetry, we would kindly say he has mistaken his calling. He had better go to work and make paper; not to waste it. If it is meant for wit, we confess we cannot "see the point" unless it lies in sins against orthography. But the reader shall hear a little of Mr. Telegraph's thunder—not much lightning though—he is not an electrical telegraph.

A Bachelor—he has no wife,
And eyes with scorn a married life,
He thinks he shuns all care and strife,
And thinks it all comes with a wife.
* * * * *

He has no wife—no love to share,
For he despises all the fair,
Then let him live alone at ease,
And let him lie alone and freeze.
* * * * *

His dog may bark his cat may squall,
His chickens on the roost may waul:
He has no wife to smooth his brow,
To calm his grief, or milk the cow;
He's like a cypher on the list,
Or like a tow-string soft in twist:
He has no wife to brush his coat,
To mend his shirt, or comb his goat:
He has no wife that can amuse,
No little boy to grease his shoes

All this jingles along like a cow-bell in dog-days. If husbands used their wives for such business as Telegraph describes the only wonder is that there are not more bachelors. But to show the young man is in earnest, take the closing stanzas.

He has no wife, when evening's come,
To bid him welcome to his home,
Whose winning accents might beguile
His saddest hour, and raise a smile;
He has no wife to point the way,
Back to the path from which we stray,
Or help to bear the heavy load
Along the path—life's weary road.
He had no wife, then let him rest,

Perhaps he's gone among the blest ;
And now he's dead and all is well,
And where he's gone I cannot tell !

How pathetic ! Friend Nares your fame will be eclipsed by Telegraph. *Buckle* to, or the glory will depart from the author of "a hymn from the German of Watts."

We have also received evidently from the same source, a parody on Highland Mary. We would advise the young man who plays the reeve (if we may use the word in reference to a Telegraph), to these productions, to send them in future to "the Athenian."

All other communications are rejected.

It remains for us to perform the hereditary duties of editors, viz., to give our readers certain very grave and very learned advice, and to inflict upon them a dose of most remarkably seniori dignity in thus bidding them adieu.

With what different feelings have we all looked forward to that epoch in college which we are wont to call "commencement." The ambitious Junior, with greedy eyes, longs for it, as the time when he shall have some semblance of truth in the dignity he has long since assumed, but which like Will Waddle's skin, 'as a lady's loose gown hangs about him.' The Sophomore hails it as the deliverer from morning recitations, and as the time when he shall be freed from the burdens of that most luckless of all classes, whose great Atlantean shoulders are condemned to carry all freaks of mischief, committed at college. The Freshman looks forward to it with the same feelings as those of boyhood, when he wished for Christmas all the year round ; that he might revel, like the renowned Jack Horner, in the nursery tale, amid the sweets of plum-puddings and apple-pies. He has heard traditions of sundry oyster stands, and cider barrels, which line the street, on that interesting occasion. Moreover he gloats over it, as the period from which he dates his freedom from the insults of a Sophomore's heel, and the privilege of doffing his roundabout, and assuming "a long tail blue." Most persecuted, unsophisticated of all classes, we wish you well.

But none of these are our feelings, fellow-seniors, in view of the approaching solemnities. To us, it will be a most solemn scene. To us, it will be the season, when we shall put off the mimic weapons of childhood, and shall robe ourselves in Herculean armor, for manly strife. We will then be men, let us act like men. We enter the great world, at a most interesting season. The seers of the land on their Pisgah heights, proclaim the dawn of a new era. The liberty and action of these latter ages are about to usher in a new inquiry in the next. Many truly believe, that the longings after truth, among the nations of the old world are but the morning stars, which shall hymn in the rising of some more glorious sun. They may be right and they may be wrong ; but let us take heed to the words of the philosopher, when he tells us that there are some errors, which no wise man will treat with rudeness, while there is a probability that they may be the refraction of some great

truth, yet below the horizon. Let us not brand as heretic, any plan to raise the dignity of human nature. Let every plan be tried. Let Transcendentalists go their own path to glory. Let the Phalanx march in associated ranks on earth. Let "love to all" be the motto of as many as choose. It can do us no harm, it may do them good. Let us strive to do something ourselves; even though it be the smallest. We should remember, that whatever is not "thought and love," is cold, heartless, "ceremony," and that neither love nor thought should be treated with disdain. We should not place ourselves, as some have done, highway-robber-like, and cry Stand, to every traveller, who goes not at what we are pleased to call the established rate to immortality. But let each one do as seemeth right to him. Let his act be as free as his will. Then shall we swell higher the hymn of triumph; then shall we aid in raising the tide of civilization, as it rolls in mountain billows; dashing proudly over every island rock of oppression. higher and higher, until it breaks in triumph on eternity's dread shore; and send its pure spray tinged with the gorgeous tints of Time's setting sun, like golden incense, up in glory, back to heaven.

Reader! this number terminates the connexion of the present class, with the organ of the collegian's literary world. They now deliver it into those other, and as they hope, better hands, which have so long anxiously awaited its reception. The errors of the past are ours; the glories of the future may be theirs. For one year we have had 'the little book' under our especial care. We have done our best to sustain it. How we have succeeded you are to say. We have walked with you, for many long months, over our toilsome path. We have sympathized with your afflictions. We have shared your sorrow. We have welcomed your joy. Friends in heart, as well as in act, we have gone along together; as friends we part; as friends we hope to meet again. We are the last fruits of the first century, of our Alma Mater's existence. May the next be ushered in by a more comely offspring; more loving to the race; more endeared to the institution: and when, one hundred years hence, another class standing where we now stand, shall look back over her course, may it be with as proud feelings as we now entertain for the past; and as glorious prospects as we now hope for the future.

Fellow-students! May God bless you and her. Good-bye. Yes,

Give to us that good old word,
That comes from the heart—GOOD-BYE!